THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Earthwork and bridges are in progress between Badarpur and Silchar (30 km) where no change in alignment is necessary. On Lumding-Badarpur section (approx. 170 km), final location survey including survey for diversion in the ghat section to suit the requirement of BG and preparation of land acquisition plan and papers has been taken up. RITES have already completed the paper alignment and staking of the alignment on ground for about 100 km length. The work on 25 km length from Lumding to Hathikali has" also been commenced.

(b) No firm target date has yet been fixed.

Exploitation of Surplus Railway Land

1013. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have come to an agreement with HUDCO to jointly develop Plans for commercial exploitation of surplus railway land;

(b) if so, the details of such joint plans;

(c) whether HUDCO has assured some fixed annual sum to the Railways to give it full access and sole rights to utilise 100 Railway stations in the country; and

(d) which are the Railway stations selected in Andhra Pradesh for commercial exploitation by jointly HUDCO and the Railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Railways and HUDCO have signed and MoU for taking up development over Railway land air-space, jointly. HUDCO will act as the co-promoter for certain identified projects. The contribution from the Railways, will be in the form of its land property and air space above it. Detailed financial and feasibility cum-demand assessment studies shall precede the development at each of the identified Schemes.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) So far, no Railway station has been identified in Andhra Pradesh for development in collaboration with HUDCO.

Conversion of Visakhapatnam-Bangalore Express service into daily service

1014. SHRI RAMACHANDRAIAH RUMANDLA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Visakhapatnam-Bangalore express service would be converted into a daily service; and

(b) if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) It is proposed to increase the frequency of 8563/8564 Visakhapatnam-Bangalore Express from 4 days a week to daily during the year 2000-2001.

Railway Reforms Commission

1015. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set up a Railway Reforms Commission to go into the problems of Indian Railways and suggest remedial measures;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) by when its report is likely to be received?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (c) The Hon'ble President in his address to the joint sitting of the Parliament on 25.10.99 has, *inter alia,* announced that "a Railway Reforms Commission will be set up to evolve a new resource mobilisation